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REMARKS

Re-examination and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

The present Supplemental Amendment is being submitted in response to a telephonic interview with the Examiner on September 29, 2004. In the telephonic interview, the Examiner indicated that certain claims were allowable. It was further agreed that Applicants would amend claims 14, 32, 36, 39 and 43 to clarify that a second driving circuit increases a voltage of the driving pulse to induce a second discharge subsequent to the first discharge, in order to place all the claims in allowable form, so that the application can be passed to issue. Applicants thank the Examiner for discussing the application with their U.S. counsel, and for reaching agreement on claim language that places the application in condition for allowance.

By the present Supplemental Amendment, Applicants amend claims 14, 32, 36 and 43 to clarify the above-discussed feature.

With respect to claim 39, Applicants' U.S. counsel contacted the Examiner on September 30, 2004 and indicated that the feature agreed to be added to claim 39 is already defined in claim 39. Specifically, Applicants' U.S. counsel noted that claim 39 already specifies that the voltage of the driving pulse is increased to induce a second discharge (see last paragraph of claim 39). Upon review of claim 39, the Examiner agreed that it is not necessary to amend claim 39.

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Further, while preparing the present amendment, Applicants' U.S. counsel noted that the above-discussed feature is already specified in claim 36. That is, claim 36 already specifies (see lines 13 and 14 of claim 36) a second driving circuit that increases the voltage of the driving pulse to induce a second discharge. Accordingly, Applicants amend claim 36 herein to indicate that the second discharge is subsequent to the first discharge.

The Examiner also requested that Applicants amend the Abstract of the present application to correspond to the Abstract contained in the counterpart International Application. By the current amendment, Applicants submit a Substitute Abstract to replace the originally filed Abstract. The Substitute Abstract is based upon the Abstract contained in the counterpart International Application, but has been revised to place it in better U.S. form.

Subsequent to the filing of the Supplemental Amendment on September 30, 2004, Applicants' U.S. counsel had further discussions with the Examiner. As a result of those discussions, claim 36 is further amended to delete the phrase "increases the voltage of said driving pulse to" in the first driving circuit clause. Further, claim 43 is further amended to clarify the first and second discharge.

In view of the present amendment, Applicants submit that all the claims are allowable. Applicants thank the Examiner for his efforts in advancing the prosecution of the present application, and look forward to receiving a notification from the Examiner indicating that

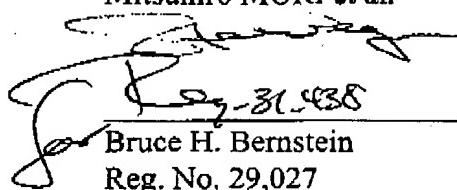
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the present application is allowed.

Should the Commissioner determine that an extension of time is required in order to render this response timely and/or complete, a formal request for an extension of time, under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), is herewith made in an amount equal to the time period required to render this response timely and/or complete. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required extension of time fee under 37 C.F.R. §1.17 to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

If there should be any questions concerning this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
Mitsuhiko MORI et al.



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